

## CHAPTER I

### AUTHOR'S ADDRESS TO THE BISMARCK D. A. R. ON PIONEER DAYS

Pioneer days with their uncertainty, their privations, and above all their adventure, were pictured by Mrs. J. S. Burgum, Arthur, yesterday at the luncheon for pioneer women given by the Minishoshe chapter, D. A. R., at Bismarck.

Born at Camp Hancock, a small handful of tents marking the place where the capital city now stands, Mrs. Burgum knew in her early childhood the fear of roving bands of marauding Indians, and the menace of the storms which swept the prairies.

But there were pleasures to make up for the hardships, and Mrs. Burgum recalls the colorful days when settlers and Indians, too, would gather for a holiday, or to do honor to some important visitor.

As a young woman, Mrs. Burgum, then Jessamine Slaughter, won the Burleigh county scholarship to the agricultural college at Fargo, and afterwards she taught in the Painted Woods district, northwest of the city.

Mrs. Burgum was married here in 1893, and lived for a time on a ranch near Washburn. She has resided in Arthur for a number of years. Her story follows:

"I am glad to be here to greet you, pioneer women of this city of my birthplace. Many changes have taken place in this goodly land where once roamed the Indian and buffalo among its sculptured buttes and terraced slopes.

"The prairies were checkered with deep trod paths, and the red man was still a menace in my early recollections, although the early settlers were coming in by ox cart, prairie schooner, or covered wagons by team or steam boat route.

"My father, Dr. B. F. Slaughter, was post surgeon in 1872 at Camp Hancock, then a village of tents, and my parents both contributed to the public welfare in the new little city development. My father was the first doctor and postmaster and my mother, Mrs. L. W. Slaughter, the first teacher. Her first efforts were made in having the children of the post meet as a Sunday school class in her tent. Later she taught in the public schools and was the first county superintendent of schools. Many a surgical operation was performed by my father among the crudest surroundings when bullet and

arrow wounds were frequent and men died with their boots on.

"The first cemetery was located north of the north Ward school, then way out of town. Later as the town grew it was abandoned and the bodies moved to St. Mary's.

### *First Roof Garden*

"The pioneer residents were as a rule young people so the picture of a silvery haired old lady is recalled clearly, as she came to my mother and invited her to see her flower garden. Now a flower garden was unheard of at that time in the land that General Hazen had described in 'Our Barren Lands of the Northwest' in which he demonstrated freely that nothing could grow here. So my mother and we children followed eagerly after 'Auntie Anthony,' who had come from the Pacific coast with her aged husband to settle in the new city. We arrived at her log cabin but no flower garden could be seen. She invited my mother to climb a ladder, leaning against the cabin wall. My mother ran nimbly up the ladder and exclaimed over the beautiful flowers growing on the sod roof while Mrs. Anthony explained at length on the advantages of growing flowers on the roof where no dog could dig up the plants or cattle destroy them. It was the first Roof Garden in Bismarck.

"Bismarck at this time of my first recollection was a collection of log cabins with sod roofs although the business houses and warehouses had tall wood false fronts like you have seen in wild west movie scenes, rows of hitching posts, and not a tree in the whole town. Later these were planted with wooden racks around them to prevent Indian ponies from gnawing their bark off. However, tree growing was at a great disadvantage until the water-works were completed a number of years later.

### *Feared the Landing*

"It was a thriving active settlement with log cabins replacing the tents, then the cabins were replaced rapidly by the frame buildings. It had a mixed population of blue clad soldiers from Fort Lincoln, teamsters and laborers from the new railroad rapidly being completed. Groups of blanketed Indians stood about watching with stolid faces the curious ways of the pale faces, the government mule teams hauling supplies, and the covered wagons trailing slowly in. The overland stage arrived galloping from Fort Buford, Fort Berthold, and Fort Stevenson, brought an air of excitement and thrilling adventure discernible to even a child. Then there was 'the landing,' a place associated in my childish mind with danger, dark and dreadful. I often heard it spoken of when my father rushed

into his office, the front room of our house, which stood on the lot where the Guaranty bank now stands. Father would grasp his surgical case and black bag, and to my mother's anxious questioning would say, 'some one shot, or stabbed, at the landing.' This was the steamboat landing, a little settlement near where the railroad bridge now spans the river, where the river traffic of boats arriving, and unloading and departing for the forts up and down the river, made a scene of surging activity.

"There were no bridges in those days and again I remember driving as a child with my father across the frozen river with his fast stepper 'Kentucky Belle' to the tiny settlement of Mandan. He called my attention to a gray wolf slinking along the brush and told me not to be afraid, that 'Kentucky Belle' could outrun it. All was silent and deserted along the lonely icebound river for the steamboats had gone south to their winter home to return next spring when the ice went out, except an occasional one that was delayed and was frozen in, only to be damaged by the ice breaking up. I recall the names of some of those boats: the 'Miner,' the 'Silver Lake,' the 'Josephine,' the 'Ida Stockdale,' the 'Far West,' the 'Rosebud,' the 'Helena,' as nowadays little children repeat the names of Buick, Ford, Pontiac, and we, as little tots, discussed and compared the steamboats, and the advantages of 'side wheelers' and 'stern wheelers.'

"When the river broke up this spring and was duly 'headlined,' I recalled that we had just such a flood. I think it was in 1881 when the river was said to be five miles wide and a steamboat steamed over the bottoms and landed at the foot of Third street.

"I recall the older people discussing a storm that wrecked so many boats at the landing. The Rosebud was blown ashore and broken to pieces and the smoke stacks on the Helena were blown down and the Silver Lake reported sunk.

"From the first Bismarck had its pioneer priest and pastor, the Catholic and the Presbyterian churches were, I believe, the first to locate here and the wide open policy that was characteristic of pioneer days was the result of this busy land of individuals who wanted the freedom of the west. The desire for adventure, the longing for advantages which this new country offered, was the impelling motive, and a tie which bound together those of various standing and conditions.

#### *Arrival of Stage was Big Event*

"When the overland stage from Deadwood in the Black Hills came there was great excitement. We were boarding at the Custer

House, having sold our own house. I was a child of four, but I can still see the old stage coach with four mustangs come dashing in with two haggard men on the box, who doubtless had run a gauntlet with Indians. Heralded by shouts of 'the Deadwood Stage is in,' men came running from different directions to greet the survivors. Who they were and what their adventure was I was too young to realize except that I knew that something was occurring.

"There was almost as much excitement as there was when it was reported that a buffalo was seen north of town and there was scurrying for horses and firearms but the valiant beast outdistanced his pursuers and swam the Missouri river. Grass had not yet grown over the buffalo paths made by a thundering herd and yet these mighty animals were already driven far away and even at that time were fast becoming extinct.

"It is said that names make news, and I will recall a few associated with early days. The two McKenzie girls and their little brother, Johnnie, were frequent playmates, as their mother, Mrs. Alex McKenzie, lived in my mother's home before her marriage, and she and Alexander McKenzie were married at our home. Little Johnnie died of pneumonia when he was six years old, to the great grief of his father and mother.

### *The First School*

"The first school in Bismarck was located on what is now the Court House Square and was taught by Mrs. Slaughter and Miss Aidee Warfel. The next schoolhouse was on Third street known as the Dr. Bently house, now owned and resided in by Mrs. J. P. Dunn.

"The first school I attended was a one-room frame dwelling house on the lot across from the Oscar Will seed house where my mother taught the village children. Later a two-room brick school was built where the Will school now stands. I remember one winter morning two new scholars appeared and were made welcome to the little circle of children of various ages and sizes that sat around the old heating stove, for the heat had not yet thawed out the corners of the room. Their names were Rolla and James, the latter a curly haired little lad, James Foley, our North Dakota poet. His mother was a very pretty young woman and I remember her stopping my mother on the street and expressing her desire to meet Frances Williard, who she greatly admired.

"Frances Williard and her young secretary, Anna Gordon, were in Bismarck and gave a lecture at the Presbyterian church in 1887.

### *Recalls Visit of Grant*

"General Sheridan, the hero of Sheridan ride, stopped at Bismarck on his inspection of western army posts, and the Sheridan House, a palatial building for the day and age, was named for him.

"General Grant was present at the laying of the corner stone of 1884 of the capitol for my mother urged we children to take a good look at the gray haired, bearded man who was speaking and to remember that we had seen General Grant.

### *Sitting Bull*

"Another familiar character was Old Sitting Bull, the famous Indian warrior. He was frequently seen with his blanket wrapped around him and his hair in two large braids over his shoulder sitting by the old Sheridan House where the Northern Pacific depot now stands, and selling his autographed photos for a dollar to easterners who stopped off the coast trains.

"I have another recollection of him as he marched at the head of his troop of Indians in the Fourth of July parade, carrying a banner with the words "March of Civilization." I am sure there must be some of the girls living here now who rode with me in that same Fourth of July parade in 1889, representing 44 states. I was the state of Kentucky. Could you now find 44 girls from 8 to 15 years old who could ride sideways on a side saddle with a long sweeping riding skirt? Practically every family had a riding pony or two for the children, and a beautiful feature of the parade was those girls in long red and white riding skirts, blue basques, and jockey caps riding four abreast.

"We were drilled for weeks at the old baseball grounds near the Country Club by Sergeant Ham, who tried to have us maneuver like his cavalry squad. Little girls and unruly ponies were a difficult combination to train, nevertheless we were a brilliant part of that long parade, I am told.

"I could go on, and fill a book with remembrances of early days for one recollection leads to another but time will not permit.

"I wish at this time to congratulate the Minishoshe Chapter D. A. R. on their noble efforts to preserving Roosevelt cabin at the capitol. A friend drove me around the Capitol grounds last evening and your splendid efforts in preserving these historic shrines will be appreciated more as the years go by and posterity will perpetuate the memory of these pioneers who came in their youthful vigor and consecrated it by their toil, and who are now laying down their burdens and cares to mingle with its heroic dust, the town they loved so well in the land of the Dacotah."



SITTING BULL

## CHAPTER II

### DR. SLAUGHTER'S DIARY AT FORT RICE, DAKOTA TERRITORY, IN 1871

In attics, among family possessions, and among heirlooms often lie historical documents, until chance reveals them to the searchers.

The original manuscript of Boswell's "Tour of the Hebrides" was found in an old croquet box, a century and a half later after the author Boswell, the most famed literary figure of the eight-



DR. B. FRANKLIN SLAUGHTER

eenth century, had written it in his notebooks and on loose papers.

His great great grandson, Lord Talbot, caused his ancestor's famous possessions to be moved to Malahide Castle, Ireland. It remained for an American, a noted book-collector, Colonel Isham, on a visit there to locate the missing manuscript.

In the wall of an old chateau in France was found Caulaincourt's great "Memoirs of Napoleon," written by General Armand

de Caulincourt, Napoleon's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and suppressed by his family in 1827 and hidden in a wall of a chateau. Later discovered, they were prepared for publication. During the German invasion they were buried in the bombardment and again recovered in 1933 when the chateau was repaired and were published in France in 1934, a hundred years later.

It's a far cry from castles in Ireland and chateaus in France to our own young state of North Dakota. Yet here are nuggets of historic gold hidden in the memory of the fast passing pioneers, in old diaries, journals, old letters, and newspapers that truly reflect the life and reactions of that early day.

After perusing the faded pages of my father's diary kept at Fort Rice in 1871, I realized that here was a record of interesting and authentic historical material of by-gone days of that now vanished fort, that once stood in white splendor on the west bank of the Missouri River. And here, day by day, in his diary was life pictured as it was lived in that dreary isolation of constant danger, in the pioneer days of long ago. So different from the environment of his early youth.

Dr. Slaughter came in 1870 to Dakota Territory to Fort Rice with a distinguished war record during the five years of the Rebellion.

Handsome, gallant, educated with the best tradition of the south, he was the ideal physician, regarding his skill as a physician and surgeon as a public trust with generous giving of his time and energy to relieve suffering humanity. He was the sympathetic friend as well as the skilled physician though it drained his vitality for he responded to the urgent cry for help in any kind of weather with the thanks of grateful hearts often his only recompense.

He was born at Bardstown, Kentucky, on his father's plantation. His kinsman, Stephen Foster, made famous that and his grandfather's plantation during his several years sojourn there, as writer and composer of southern lyrics. There was nothing strange, in those days of southern hospitality, for guest relatives to come to visit and stay several years. Especially one of Stephen Foster's talents and gracious gifts. In those idyllic days "befo' de wah," visitors of his kind were a delightful asset in that happy, easy-going land of plenty with numerous servants and spacious plantation houses. Here Stephen Foster composed those famous songs, "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Black Joe," "Old Folks at Home," etc., that are now sung around the world.



Dr. Slaughter lost his mother before he could remember her, but he never lacked for cousins for his father had eleven brothers scattered through Kentucky and Virginia and one of them became governor of Wisconsin Territory. He had much older half brothers for his father had been married before and later married a wealthy lady with two half grown sons. She disciplined her own sons as severely as she did her slaves but ignored her small stepson, Franklin, when dealing out punishment, were his memories of her.

On this lovely plantation "Vilulla" with its gracious hospitality, Dr. Slaughter spent a happy childhood, before the war scourge of the 60's laid waste its fair acres, freed the slaves and the thoroughbred horses, their owners' pride, were confiscated by both armies. For Kentucky, a borderline state, was overrun by the opposing forces, by raiders, by renegades from either side.

Before these dreadful days dawned on the unhappy land, Dr. Slaughter, or "Franklin" as he was called, was riding his pony to Bardstown, followed by a negro slave, to receive his first education at the Bardstown Academy of St. Joseph. Later he attended the Episcopal Military College at Shelbyville, graduating there in 1859 and then began the study of medicine at the University of Louisville with the U. S. Medical Cadets of that year, later graduating in 1863 into the U. S. Army with rank of Major of Staff.

Kentucky was one of the southern states that did not secede during the Rebellion although the storms of protest for and against the "Federal Government," "Abraham Lincoln," "State's Rights," and the "Confederacy" raged up and down the state.

Dr. Slaughter's aged father died in 1860, and with that guiding spirit gone, he made his own decision, in a whirlwind of debate, acrimony and tense feeling. He would be loyal to the Union, southerner that he was: loyal to the stars and stripes under which his father had fought at Buena Vista. For the Union his forbears had fought to preserve in the War of 1812 and the Revolutionary War. His ancestor, Captain Phillip Slaughter, had been the first officer to respond to the call for troops in the colony of Virginia, later he became General Washington's chaplain. After the Revolutionary War the government was bankrupt and unable to pay the soldiers who had suffered such hardships. Grants of land were given them in Ohio, Virginia, and Kentucky, then a western wilderness of forests with savage beasts and still more savage Indians. These soldiers had carved themselves homes out of this wilderness and made

it fair as the "Promised Land," and laid the foundation, like true pioneers, of great commonwealths.

With such traditions behind him, he stood firmly by the government although half-brothers, step-brothers, cousins enlisted under the "Bonnie Blue Flag" for the Confederate States and wore the Rebel gray.

He and his classmates of the U. S. Medical Cadets donned the blue uniform of the Federal Government. He was commissioned on his 24th birthday as full surgeon of the 55th Kentucky Volunteers in 1865 and was presented with an engraved sword by the officers and a thoroughbred horse with saddle and gold mounted spurs by the enlisted men at the close of the war. Previous to this time he had served in Brown's Hospital and adjacent field hospitals and at the front at the battle of Stone River.

The 55th Kentucky Volunteers were ordered to Crittenden, Grant County, in 1865 to head off Morgan's command coming in from east Tennessee. They started after dark with the rain coming down in torrents and the ambulances began to fill up with dismounted men and their accoutrements. Dr. Slaughter started to ride to the head of the column which was two miles long, the men riding four abreast. He requested the colonel to slack his killing pace, when his own horse slipped and fell, crushing his ankle against the stone turnpike. He was soon released and placed in an ambulance and the next day witnessed the surrender of a portion of the historic John Morgan's command with 570 men and 68 officers. Dr. Slaughter's step-brother, Major Buell, C. S. A., was one of the latter but as Dr. Slaughter was lying in an ambulance with a crushed ankle, the effects of which he felt all his after life, it was hard to say which was in the worst plight, the one in Federal blue or the one in Confederate gray. However, they met in harmony, shook hands and parted, both believing they were in the right. As the old poem said:

Northern valor, southern pride,  
Stern resolve on either side."

The Confederacy was disintegrating for it was the "beginning of the end" and yet both the blue and the gray sang the same sentimental song around their camp fires or with the regiments at the front, a plaintive lyric called "Loreena." (It was the stay-at-homes who sang the bloody, challenging war songs.) But those who bore the

danger and burden of the fray sang "Loreena" at their bivouacs. Following is the first of its six sweetly and romantically sad verses, full of homesick longing for by-gone days:

"The years creep slowly by, Loreena,  
The snow is on the grass again,  
The sun's low down the sky, Loreena.  
The frost is where the flowers have been,  
But the heart throbs on as warmly now  
As when the summer days were nigh;  
Oh, the sun can never dip so low  
Adown affection's cloudless sky."

Many a time I've seen tears in my father's eyes and his Civil War comrades also when someone sang "Loreena," its haunting melody invoking sad and plaintive memories of the past.

After the close of the war, Dr. Slaughter's regiment, the 55th Kentucky Volunteers, were mustered out. He returned to Bardstown to find society in chaos, the estates confiscated, the darkies free, and, as he expressed it, "Everything gone to the demnation bow-wows." He returned to Louisville, Kentucky, and entered private practice with his half-brother, Dr. Daniel Slaughter, twenty years his senior, and also accepted the chair of Demonstrator of Anatomy at his Alma Mater, University of Louisville, Kentucky. He became a writer on medical subjects and the University conferred on him the degree of Ad. E. Endum.

But a professor's chair held little attraction for the ardent southerner after the exciting days of war so he entered the regular army in 1867, in the 17th U. S. Infantry Regiment, serving during the Reconstruction Days in western Tennessee.

Here he met his future wife, Miss Linda Warfel, of Oberlin College, a writer of note and a teacher who was organizing the demoralized freed men and their children into schools and congregations under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of Missions. They were married at her home in Cadiz, Ohio, in the Presbyterian Church of her forefathers, and for two years lived at Fort Humbolt, Tennessee, Swayne's Barracks. They enjoyed army life in the soft southern climate of Tennessee but the regiment, the 17th Infantry, was ordered to the Department of Dakota, Fort Benton, Montana Territory. The orders were later changed to Fort Rice, Dakota

Territory, so in 1870, on the steamboat the "Katie P. Kountz," they came up the Missouri River to Fort Rice.

### • *Fort Rice*

Fort Rice, just above the Cannon Ball River, was half way between Fort Benton, Montana, and Fort Randall on the South Dakota line on a 1,300 mile stretch and the nearest settlement was at Yankton.

Fort Rice was the rendezvous and point of departure of several expeditions to the Yellowstone, the surveyors and engineers of the Northern Pacific Railroad. A military escort accompanied them, with artillery, scouts, wagons, etc. There were no roads, dim trails along the river. After the river froze the mails were brought from Yankton by Arikaree scouts who enlisted for that purpose, and from Fort Rice to Stevenson and to Berthold. The mounds alluded to were built to mark the trail so the mail carriers would not lose their way on the prairie. They feared to follow the river for frequently they were attacked by the hostile Sioux.

Life in this walled fort was irksome and dangerous, far from the diversities and interludes of civilization. Rising early at the insistent call of the bugle at "sick call," he made his rounds of cases, men wounded by bullets or arrows, men frozen, and suffering from gangrene, injured by horses, deficiency diseases, "scurvy" caused by deficient rations issued of meat, white bread, black coffee, syrup, lard, etc. No eggs or milk or green vegetables were possible to be transported such distances.

At the post hospital Frank La Frambois, the half-breed hero scout of the Sibley campaign, lay on his cot, coughing his life away. On other cots lay "malinigers," homesick, nerve-shattered men who simulated every known disease in order to escape or be discharged. The post cemetery was dotted with headstones marked "Killed by Indians" or "Frozen to Death."

Yet his diary chronicles no hints of the dreary isolation and no heroics over the inevitable strain of nerves and body in the constant struggle with danger and disease. Just brief statements of daily routine.

Journal of Dr. B. F. Slaughter of the 17th Infantry, written at Fort Rice. D. T., 1871.

June 22, 1871—

This has been an exciting day. Had just returned from sick call

at the hospital, at 7:30, and taken my seat looking out the back window of my bedroom, when I noticed several Indians dashing across the plain at a furious rate. As this place presents an unobstructed view of a couple of miles in width and three or four in length, I took in the whole performance in an instant. I then saw for the first time in reality what I had often seen in pictures. Fifty hostile Indians on their ponies (Shunkacar) dashing across the plain to intercept our herd of about 100 beeves, horses and mules, then grazing on the plain. The herders forced the stock into a run, but they were too late; some half dozen Indians had gotten between them and the Fort. The long roll is sounded—next moment soldiers are pouring out of the Fort. A party of Indian scouts belonging to the fort here joined in the chase. The next instant hostile Indians, friendly Indians, herders, horses and cattle were indiscriminately mixed. On my right an Indian scout, who has been caught without arms is doing very handsome tumbling, whilst his enemy, seated on his pony that has been checked so suddenly as to throw it on its haunches, is firing at him with a revolver. On my left two herders, cut off, still hurrying the stock toward the fort, which have now become thoroughly frightened by the shooting and whooping, their heads turned in the right direction, and are moving so compactly that the Indians can not turn them or get to the herders in the rear. The crack of firearms can be heard in all directions, but now at long range. Mr. Lo has failed in his undertaking as far as the government stock is concerned. They managed, however, to secure six ponies belonging to the "Ree" scouts. The whole affair from beginning did not occupy fifteen minutes. Nobody hurt. Forgot to mention the "Kate P. Kuntz" passed down on the 10th. Wm. Braithwaite, clerk, and David Campbell, pilot, came up to the fort to see me.

June 23, 1871—

The "Hallie Moore," Capt. Moore commanding, passed up this afternoon for Ft. Buford; met Maj. Cunningham on board.

June 27, 1871—

The "Peniah" passed down this morning. She went to Ft. Benton; was introduced to the captain, Daniel Brady.

June 28, 1871—

Wrote to John S. Murphy, Union City, Tenn., and Major Nichols, paymaster at Sioux City, Iowa.

June 29, 1871—

Mail brought in this evening at 6 o'clock by Indian scouts from Ft. Stevenson. Our mail going to the States leaves tomorrow.

June 30, 1871—

The troops from the fort were mustered today for pay. Expect the paymaster here on the Fourth. Wind blowing a hurricane. Was down on the river today.

July 1, 1871—

The "Ida Stockdale," Capt. Gilhim, arrived today from Sioux City. He reports the "Ida Reese" sunk near the mouth of the White River. We grounded there coming up May 25, 1870. Nobody lost; nearly all the freight saved. She was coming up loaded with freight for Ft. Benton. We met the "Ida Reese"—she was going down—just below Fort Sully, May 28, 1870.

July 2, 1871—

Lieut. Josiah Chance was today placed under arrest by the "commanding officer"—his name, the sooner forgotten the better. The "Silver Lake" came up today and stopped. She is bound for Ft. Benton. The Ree Indian scouts have been discharged by the commanding officer. Bah! Had nothing else to do.

July 3, 1871—

Sunday—A calm Indian summer afternoon, yet we have no solemn deep-toned bell nor anything else to remind us that this is the holy day of rest. How different the day in these wilds, so far beyond the restraints of civilization. Are we by nature wicked, "totally depraved," and is Christianity but a basis upon which man has super-reared a wall to keep himself within appropriate bounds? Whatever may be his conduct outwardly, he inwardly reveres—a reverence implanted there in infancy, which the hardening influence of a misspent life cannot eradicate. Having heard much and saw much today of the wicked perversity of man (and woman), and good intentions coming still-born into the world, verily, man is a mystery.

July 6, 1871—

The "Miner" passed up today bound for Fort Benton.

July 26, 1871—

Went horseback riding with Lieutenants Greene, Troxel, and Potter; visited a gulch three miles west by north from the fort, where we discovered outcroppings of what appeared to be coal. Bringing home some samples, it was found to burn freely. Think this vein could be worked to advantage, barring, of course, the hos-

tile Indians. It would require first, permission, as it is on the government reservation; secondly, capital.

July 27, 1871—

The quartermaster sent out a wagon and brought back a quantity of this coal, which was distributed among the officers' families to experiment with. It is superior, certainly, to the green cottonwood we are now using. Men report hostile Indians in vicinity of mine.

July 28, 1871—

The Sioux scouts packed up last night and left for Grand River. This would be called desertion if they were white or negro soldiers; as they are Indians it is all right and nothing will be done about it. Our Arickaree scouts who were discharged on the 2nd as a matter of accommodation to Mr. Sioux, will be recalled—if they will come. The Arickarees have been friendly to the whites for 10 or 15 years. They have been employed at this post for a year and have performed their duties faithfully; were discharged to satisfy their enemies, who then came up, enlisted to do mail service, and then skipped off; went down to Grand River one evening when they knew the mail would be ready for them the next morning. If that is not "pure cussedness," I would like to know what you would call it.

August 3, 1871—

Lieut. Graves left for the States today, on leave, on the "Silver Lake."

August 4, 1871—

The "May Lowry" arrived today with 50 tons of freight for this post. She returned after unloading. The prairies on the opposite side of the river have been on fire for four or five days.

August 5, 1871—

Went hunting today; killed four prairie chickens and two hawks. The "Miner," that passed up-bound for Fort Benton on the 6th, is now due.

August 8, 1871—

Pleasant day. Linda went horseback riding with Mrs. Humbolt and Lieut. Burnes. Just after their return a wind sprang up and after dark it blew a perfect hurricane, making our house creak mournfully. The prairie has been on fire for a week and last night with renewed vigor, lighting up the prairie for a length of 20 miles.

August 9, 1871—

Calm and warm. Thermometer stood 95 degrees in the shade.

By 8 a. m. it was blowing a young hurricane. The whole north-west is grandly illuminated.

August 10, 1871—

Wind still blowing. Thermometer dropped to 60 degrees. Received this morning the subjoined orders.: "A. A. Surgeon B. F. Slaughter, U. S. A., will report to Lieut. James Humbolt, commanding detachment on duty under special order No. 110 from Headqrs. Dept. Dakota, to build mounds to mark the trail between here and Painted Woods, 60 miles up the river." Am ordered to take medical supplies for thirty days.

August 12, 1871—

Prairies have been on fire since the 1st inst.

August 15, 1871—

Got ready today to leave for Painted Woods. Began crossing wagons and mules at 7:00 a. m. By 11:00 a. m. had over all but two loads, but had to suspend operations on account of high wind. Got in the yawl and crossed over to see about my traps and, although we had a "bully" crew, I found it a hazardous undertaking. The billows were fearful and at one time I was fearful the boat would swamp. One billow struck it in the stern, breaking over and shipping about a barrel of water. Began at 4:00 p. m. to cross over the remainder of the mules. Mail just then came in and we crossed over. At 5:00 p. m. we were ready. I had started down to embark, when orders came directing that the detachment pitch their tents and await further orders. Orders came in the mail directing that two companies be gotten ready to accompany an expedition to the Yellowstone River. Also an order directing that Capt. John -----, now on duty at this post, be sent to the military hospital at Washington, D. C., and that Lieut. Thos. Troxel be ordered to take charge of him.

August 16, 1871—

A "wow," a "wumpus" in camp today. Capt. ----- felt himself much aggrieved at the order sending him to the hospital for mental cases and, suspecting Dr. G----- in being instrumental in having it done, pitched into him and made a black eye. Mrs. G----- was going to shoot up the unruly captain, but was met by Lieut. Burnes, and the revolver taken from her. Altogether it has been a lively day. Orders are to leave tomorrow, as soon as we can get off, and mark the trail to Painted Woods, anyhow. Will get ready this time after I know everybody else is.

August 17, 1871—

After much delay, our detachment moved off with 21 men, 16



mules, and 2 horses at 2:00 p. m.. We marched to a bottom six miles distant, called the "Hay Camp" and pitched our tents at 4:00 p. m. Just after going into camp a courier came up with a letter directing that the locality in which Private Sheehan was separated from the mail party, six days previous, be examined and ascertain, if possible, his fate. He was cut off by a prairie fire.

August 18, 1871—

Got up at 4:00 a. m. Breakfast at 4:30, left at 5:00. Killed 3 chickens at 7:00. Reached Apple Creek at 12:00 m. Rested half an hour at the Creek, watered stock and crossed over. Like to have sunk one of our six mule teams. Resolved to reach Burnt Creek, 15 miles distant, before halting for the night. Prairie burnt in all directions. Reached Burnt Creek at 5:00 p. m. Have been in the saddle 12 consecutive hours. Saw two deer at the crossing. This is beautiful camp ground. A beautiful meadow bottom of 100 acres, perfectly green and strongly contrasting with the burnt and blackened country over which we have passed. The Creek almost encircles it and a semi-circle of hills invest it, so symmetrical that I can scarcely believe it to be the handiwork of nature, whilst the other half opens on the black hills, range after range.

August 19, 1871

Moved off at 6 a. m. Marched to where Private Sheehan was intercepted by the fire. Rode to the top of the different buttes, from the summit of which I could examine the country for miles around. Don't believe he was burned. Two miles from here is a large belt of unburned country. Think he may have returned to the trail and striking it at some dim point, passed over it unobserved and got back on the prairie and lost his way. After traveling six miles from camp, concluded to go down under the bluffs, which we did. Had to abandon the mail trail at Burnt Creek. Terrible broken country here in sight of the Missouri River. Kept two outriders busy examining the different points, to avoid getting into some places we could not get our train out of, and this, too, in a country where we could not get wood or water enough to cook with. Saw nothing but that interminable succession of buttes, ridges and coulees so characteristic of the "Land of the Dakotahs." Sergt. Ahrens and two men got permission to go ahead this morning and hunt. I let them have my gun. It is now dark and they are not in. We reached here at 3:30 p. m.—"Painted Woods." Fired my signal guns at 9:00 p. m. for the absent party—no answer.

August 20, 1871—

Sergt. Ahrens and the men came in this morning. They had omitted turning down the bluffs, but instead kept on 15 miles above here. His wolf dog gave out for want of water and he was compelled to leave him on the prairie. This is the third anniversary of my marriage. Went 12 miles above here (Painted Woods) duck hunting, with Pfothenhaur, the wood chopper. Killed 12 ducks and 2 chickens.

August 21, 1871—

Sunday—Wrote to my wife. Lieut. Cairnes went out with a wagon to stake the road to the top of the bluffs, 12 miles distant. Have only built one mound so far as an experiment.

August 22, 1871—

Built three mounds today.

August 23, 1871—

Went hunting today; saw one deer and one antelope.

August 24, 1871—

Went hunting. Killed one duck and 23 hawks.

August 25, 1871—

Left Painted Woods this morning. This place is called "Painted Woods" because it was the battle ground between the Sioux Indians and the Arickarees. Many of the trees are marked with Indian devices representing incidents of battles. Marched 20 miles and pitched our tents at Burnt Creek. Killed 8 chickens and 2 ducks on the way.

August 26, 1871—

Left Burnt Creek this morning at 7 o'clock with one six-mule team and two men for Fort Rice, 42 miles distant, for forage for both man and beast. Got into fort at 2:30 p. m. Brought up rear of a train of 49 wagons, just getting in from Ft. Wadsworth, destined for the Yellowstone. Saw a wolf, deer and four antelopes in the road. Sergt. Ahren's wolf dog was at home.

August 28, 1871—

Left Fort Rice this morning at 10:00 a. m., wagons loaded and roads heavy. Excessively warm. Reached Burnt Creek 42 1-2 miles distant at 9:30 p. m. Found camp in good condition and spirits.

September 9, 1871—

The expedition for the Yellowstone left this morning. General Whistler in command.

October 14, 1871—

The great expedition to the Yellowstone, conducted by engineers of the Northern Pacific Railroad and escorted by United States troop, that left Fort Rice, has returned, having successfully accomplished the exploration and survey of a route through Yellowstone Valley, reaching to the river of that name and to the mouth of the Powder River. The party encountered many hostile Indians and their return march is described as a series of constant skirmishes. But few lives were lost, however, as every precaution was taken to prevent straggling from the main line, it being well known the Indian method of warfare is to hover close to the enemy's outskirts and attack those who stray out of sight. Thus were killed Lieut. Adair of the 6th and Lieut. Eben Crosby of the 17th, two brave and worthy officers. Their dreadful death has filled us all with sorrow. Lieut. Crosby, following a wounded antelope, had ridden out of sight of his party, no Indians having been seen that day, and all felt secure, so near home were they—a day's ride from the fort. But shortly after he disappeared, a force of Indians appeared in full view on a neighboring hill, among them an Indian called "The Gaul," well known at Cheyenne Agency, who with derisive shouts and taunting gestures, displayed some object in his hand, which, by the aid of field glasses, was discovered to be the scalp of the unfortunate officer. Search was at once made and his mutilated body found and taken to Fort Rice for burial.



CAMP HANCOCK IN 1872

This ancient and rare photo of Camp Hancock, the original site of Bismarck is owned by Orris W. Roberts, of the Weather Bureau. The log buildings were the first erected there and the building with the flag staff in front was the surgeon's quarters and many of the old timers recall it as the birth place of the author, Mrs. Jessamine Slaughter Burgum.

### CHAPTER III

## INTRODUCTION TO "FROM FORTRESS TO FARM"

*by Jessamine Slaughter Burgum*

My mother, Mrs. Linda W. Slaughter, was North Dakota's or rather Dakota Territory's first woman writer without question, and she had the true writer's gift in seeing things that others would pass by and a constant realization that the scenes in the lonely Fort Rice and the early settlement of Bismarck were important to history.

She was educated at Oberlin College, one of the few institutions to admit women, going from there to Kentucky as a home missionary of the Presbyterian church to the freed men of the south. There she met Dr. B. Frank Slaughter, who had served through the war as surgeon of the 55th Kentucky volunteers with rank of major of staff. After the war they were married and remained in the service at Swayn Barracks, Tennessee. The 17th regiment was ordered to Department of Dakota to Fort Rice, an intermediate point between Fort Sully, 275 miles below, and Fort Stevenson, 150 miles above, trackless waste over which roamed the buffalo and wild game and still wilder Indian tribes constantly at war with each other.

Before her marriage Mrs. Slaughter had written two books, "Summerings in the South" and "Freedmen of the South," and had published a book of girlhood poems under the title "Early Efforts." At Fort Rice she wrote a serial story for the Bismarck Tribune called "The Amazonian Corps," which was later dramatized and acted by officers and men at Fort Lincoln. This was really a resume of life and incidents of Fort Rice or Fort Oryza, as the serial story was called, and the mythical hero, Ross Ingelbright, and his adventure is a distinctly modern plea for peace and anti-militarism. Although written sixty years ago in a walled fort hundreds of miles from civilization, surrounded by blood-thirsty savages, it is a plea for the common soldier, the forgotten man. These mute inglorious heroes sacrificed to protect incoming settlers. These unknown heroes who too often spent days and nights of watchful waiting with torture and horrible death waiting outside the walls of the fort—"Theirs not to reason why; theirs but to do and die." The pathos of it all, the futility of war impelled Mrs. Slaughter to write this

thrilling serial "The Amazonian Corps" or Life at Fort Oryza."

When in 1873 General Hazen wrote a pamphlet on "Our Barren Lands" and characterized all that country west of the 101st meridian to the Rocky Mountains as the "great American desert," she fearlessly defended her state with her ever-ready pen in two articles entitled "The New Northwest" and "Leaves from Northwest History." These were both published in the Fargo Forum. General Hazen had based his conclusion on carelessly-kept data at Fort Buford, and he admitted later that he was prejudiced by what he called General Custer's over-praise of it. Her sketches and letters to eastern journals attracted much attention, and the N.P.R.R. commissioned her to write weekly letters to Chicago, St. Paul, and New York newspapers, which she did for two years, receiving in turn several Bismarck lots on the south side of Main street, but she was never able to realize on them, due to townsite difficulties. The "Dolly Varden Letters" written in a light and humorous vein and published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press in 1872 dated from "The Crossing" and were written from Camp Hancock, where the weather Bureau is now located. "The Crossing" or the N.P.R.R. crossing of the Missouri river, which did not take place for ten years after, was first called "The Crossing" of the Missouri river by the N.P.R.R., later "Edwinton, and later Bismarck. My niece, Miss Hazel Hedstrom, has typewritten "From Fortress to Farm" from the files in the Historical Society and I have the manuscript ready for publication as we feel that historically they are well worth preserving.

To Mrs. Slaughter, more than anyone else, is due the credit of preserving the early history of the state in general and Bismarck in particular by organizing the Ladies' Historical Society in 1872, of which she was president until later it was merged into the State Historical Society in 1889. To do justice to the worthy pioneers and to preserve the records of the early history of the county and state in correct and permanent form was the object of the society.

She contributed an article on Antiquities of the Region and together with the specimens sent them to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, D. C. The traces of circular wall and the bastion were plainly discernible as well as the extinct Anahawah fort on the site east of Fort Lincoln. But as she wisely wrote: "Our people are too deeply engrossed in making the future history of the country worthy of commemoration and too much alive to the necessity of exertion to save themselves from a similar fate at the hands of the descendants of their destroyers to spare thought and time to preserve

the relics of the great nation that once flourished on the land where we dwell."

Mrs. Slaughter's interests extended far and wide. When an old Indian seeress, "Ziwinta" told her the legend of the Mandans, Minatarees, "the people who came across the great water" and of their earth forts. Mrs. Slaughter and a party of friends in September, 1872, set out from Camp Hancock to the hill by Fort McKean and found the remains of one of these earth forts on the high bluff on the east bank of the river near the mouth of the Big Heart river. They found specimens of pottery and broken weapons.

That her sympathetic heart appreciated the viewpoint of the persecuted Indians is exemplified in an extract from her poem "Sunset."

"Lost from these plains and winding war-path red;  
No war-cry through the arching wood resounds;  
The Indian mourns his desecrated dead,  
Burnt villages and rifled hunting-grounds;  
Fleeing far westward from the white man's gun,  
The rushing stream their fathers loved was crossed,  
With faces turned toward the setting sun,  
Last remnants of a mighty nation lost.  
Their unplumed warriors, sachems, where are they?  
The fallen sons of lofty-minded sires.  
Far from their native forests, they, today,  
On distant prairies build their council fires.

Here is another of her prophetic poems that shows her great love for North Dakota and her vision and character. A copy of this poem, together with her pamphlet "The New Northwest" written at the request of the Pioneer Society in 1872 were placed in the corner stone of the Burleigh county courthouse at its Masonic dedication in 1880. The poem was set to music and sung by the pupils of the public schools. At that time Mrs. Slaughter was superintendent of schools for Burleigh county.

Hail! ye builders of a city;  
Ye, whose crowning work of good,  
Here awaits its consecration  
From the mystic brotherhood.  
We, your children, join with gladness  
In these rites above all creeds:  
Happy thus to add our tribute  
To the merit of your deeds.

• Ye have wrought with wondrous patience,  
In what seemed a desert land;  
Ye have hoped and ye have striven,  
Ye have wrought with purpose grand;  
Ye have conquered and succeeded,  
Ye are victors, laurel-crowned.  
Ye have reared this goodly city  
In a western land new found.

No useless pile your hands have reared,  
No; nor empty pyramid,  
Wherein the dust of perished men  
May forevermore be hid.  
Here is room for thought and action;  
Here is room for voice and pen;  
Here are schools and goodly churches,  
Here are homes for living men.

• Here are farms, and homes and workshops,  
Here are pulsating human hearts;  
Here are palaces of beauty.  
Here are temples of the arts.  
Here are sunset glints in glory  
On broad prairies bright with grain.  
And the iron rails of traffic  
Intersect the fruitful plain.

Justice here hath found a lodgment  
In this temple soon to rise.  
Faith hath laid the firm foundation,  
All was planned by judgment wise.  
Soon this noble superstructure,  
In its being will attest  
The strength and worth of manliness  
That hath civilized the west.

Oh, our fathers, loved and honored,  
Who have wrought this wondrous good,  
Guard your trust—Oh, guard it wisely!  
As befits true brotherhood!  
We, your children, gladly thank you  
For these gifts of gracious hands.  
More we praise the great All-Father,  
For his love to all the lands.



Two poems written while she was a girl at Oberlin College and published in her book of poems entitled "Early Efforts" are:

### EXPERIENCE

In the pond among the lilies  
Where the folded blossoms lie  
Mirrored forth in calm reflection  
From the warmly glowing sky.  
Is a picture, sketched in clearness  
Of each rock and tree and hill  
Canopied by shifting cloud wreaths  
In the shallow waters still.

From the shore a tiny pebble  
In the lake-lets bosom cast  
Bubbling up in endless circles  
Each one larger than the last—  
Stirs the slime beneath the lilies  
Breaks its imaged brightness rare  
Leaving stains of mud and blackness  
Where had smiled the picture fair.

Thus the soul lake in my bosom  
In life's sunshine's polished bright  
Mirrors forth in spotless colors  
Naught but forms and faces bright.  
Till, disturbed by breath and harshness  
Where its fadeless lilies grow  
Stained, discolored, rudely broken  
Fades away the pictured show.

Glow the mind's deep shining mirror  
Hidden in Life's silent stream  
When Experience breaks the surface  
And destroys the placid dream,  
It revives in chastened beauty  
Cleansed from dross and folly's slime  
Unlike the shattered picture pond  
Repainted for all time.

## THE WREATH OF FAME

I entered a church on a cold, dark day.  
A lesson of life to learn.  
And to find relief from the scorching thoughts  
That down in my heart-depths burn.

The tremulous notes of the organ rolled  
Through the arched Cathedral walls.  
And the taper showered its mystic light  
Aslant on the dim old walls.

Beneath the shade of the cruel cross  
By the altar's sacred rail.  
There stood, with holy eyes upraised  
A statue, pure and pale.

The pensive brow of the Virgin shone  
Encircled with a circlet of flame  
And I thought, how like to this burnig crown  
Is the gilded Wreath of Fame.

It circles the brow like a wreath of flame  
A coronet gleaming bright  
But the victim who wears the scorching crown  
Sees naught but the darksome night.

And sad that the glare of her living crown  
Condemns her to stand alone.  
The flame that lightens the life of the world  
Is scorching away her own.

## CHAPTER IV

### "FROM FORTRESS TO FARM"

or

### "TWENTY-THREE YEARS ON THE FRONTIER"

*By Linda W. Slaughter*

Written in 1896 at Bismarck

### THE "SMOKY WATER COUNTRY" IN 1870

The upper Missouri country in 1870 was a region almost unknown outside of military circles. Its grassy plains and cactus-covered hills were the heritage and stronghold of the migratory Sioux nation whose powerful tribes pursued their savage avocations unmolested, throughout its wide extent. From the Red River of the



LINDA W. SLAUGHTER

North to the base of the Rocky mountains, all was nature in a state of savagery. The great river that flowed in a southeasterly course

through almost the entire length of Dakota territory, was then called the Missouri on the maps, but by the warrior whose raft of logs tied together by deer thongs, was propelled from shore to shore with oars of willow wood, and by the solitary squaw, whose bull-boat rocked upon its heaving tide, it was called the "Minne-sho-sho," from a name-word of the Onkpapa Sioux, which signifies "smoky water." This name by the Indians has been translated into the white man's unromantic speech, as the "Big Muddy," in reference to the turbid, yellow flood, into which it is transformed, during the spring freshets and "the June rise."

All who, in later years, have stood upon its willowy banks and watched the graceful steamers that go up and down its flowing waters; bearing on their crowded decks, the commercial wealth of the northwest country, must have felt that this magnificent stream, is emblematic of the grand, imperial domain through which its restless waters roll.

We have looked upon its placid breast in summer, heaving scarcely perceptibly with the rise and fall of the strong but stealthy tide beneath; and have seen at night, the mirrored crescent of the moon, reflected from its dancing wavelets.

We have looked for it in the cold of winter, and found it not. In its stead appeared only a deep, white, ice-locked gorge, winding its desolate way between long lines of snow-clad hills.

In the spring time we have seen that mighty bridge dissolved, and the massive blocks of ice, clear and smooth as glass, that formed the piers and abutments of the wondrous superstructure carried down headlong with the foaming, yellow torrent or cast in wild confusion on its shore.

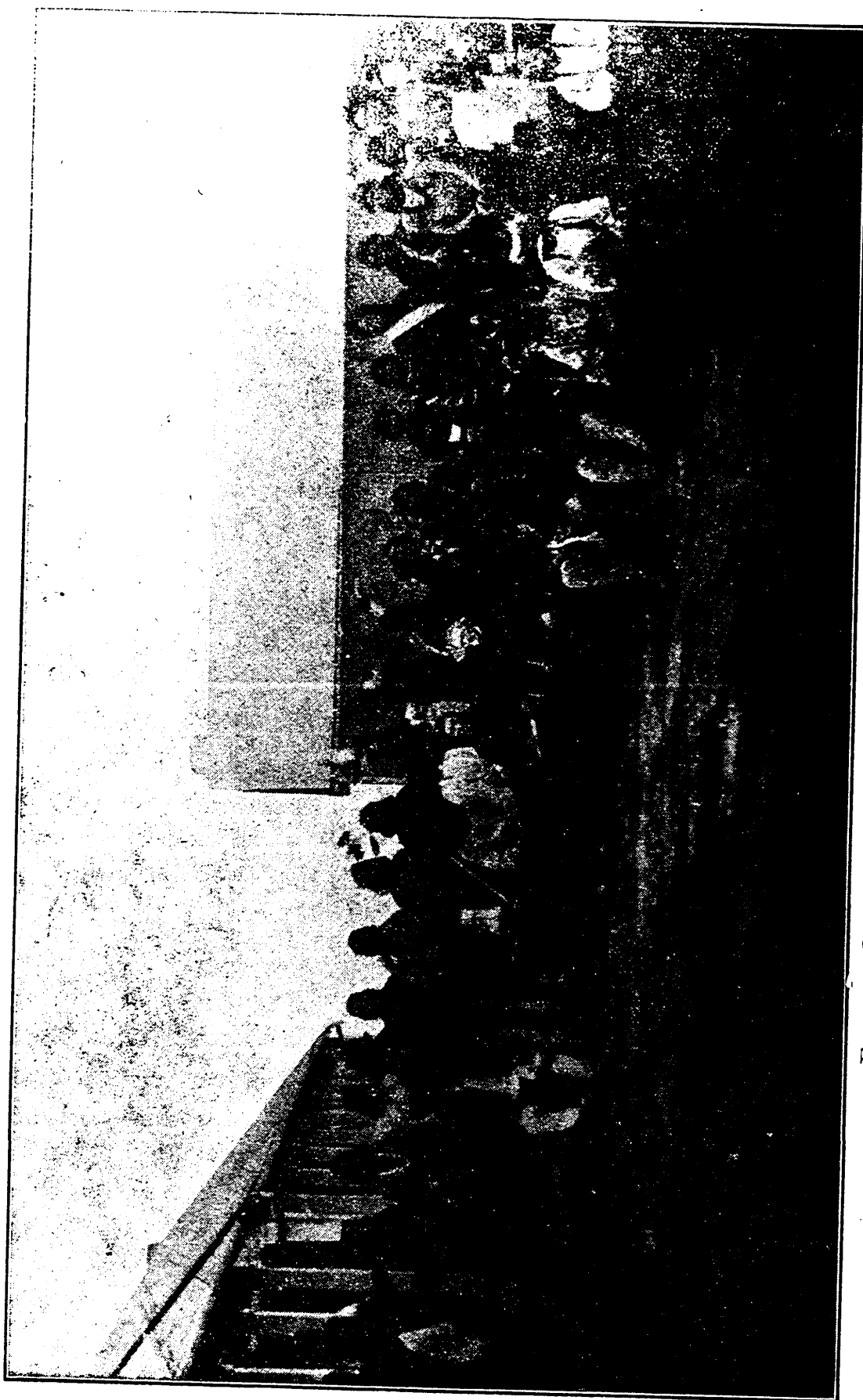
In all seasons, and in all its varied aspects, we have found it beautiful, and dear will it ever be; this wild, majestic, ever changing river, to the hearts of all who have learned to revere the works of nature and to love the land that gave them birth.

Not many years have gone by since the "smoky water" river flowed in unbroken solitude through desolate hills and silent, uninhabited prairies. The northwest country was a vast and trackless wild, unpeopled save by roaming bands of rude and savage Indians. Herds of buffalo trampled the low banks of the broad river, and the thirsty wolf, lapped unmolested the waters of its many tributaries. A landscape more dreary, a scene more desolate, cannot well be imagined. The vast, treeless plains that stretched away to the westward and eastward, of the long, winding line of the Missouri, were covered

only with the coarse grass of the prairie, and were untenanted, save by the deer and the buffalo, and the small, shy creatures that furnished game for savage sportsmen. What wonder that these wise men, reasoning from the severe climate, the sterile soil and lack of timber, should declare the land a wilderness, unfit for human habitation, and prophesy that the whole, vast expanse of country, would remain evermore, a desert of barren land, sacred forever to the wintry winds, the wolves and the Indians.

Gradually all this was changed, nature, the wise goddess of the universe, had long been silently at work, preparing the land for human habitation. Deep in her hidden laboratories, beneath the bare, brown hills, she had prepared in inexhaustable quantities, masses of precious ore and lignite. The unseen forces were at work above the clouds and wrought chemical changes in the soil and atmosphere. The heavenly dews descended, and the gentle rain was filtered through the softened air, and where it fell upon the parched surface of the thirsty soil, new forms of vegetable life appeared. The freshened earth blushed into beauty, and nature smiled upon the regenerated land, and pronounced it fit for homes of men.

Then destiny, the handmaid of nature, led by the hand to the recreated world of the new west, the adventurous soul, that in all times have formed the vanguard of the ever advancing army of pioneers. There were the fur traders, who sought to exchange the products of civilization for the furs of buffalo, otter and beaver, that were slain and entrapped by the wild denizens of the plains. With them came those dauntless missionaries of the cross, the Catholic priests, who hoped to instill the germs of true religion into the superstitious minds of the unlettered children of the Great Spirit. Following these, came the hunter with his rifle, the trapper with his tools, the scout whose restless spirit scorned the restraints of civilization, and last of all, the frontiersman who hoped to find here, in the new life of the west, a home for his wife and babies. When danger menaced those, and the wild tribes of the desert threatened their destruction, the strong arm of the government was stretched out to save and to protect. Then and there, along the shores of the broad river, arose the military forts, whose stout plank stockades and bastions formed their city of refuge in times of danger.



FATHER GENIN—PEACE COUNCIL HELD AT FORT ABERCROMBIA

## CHAPTER V

### EARLY FORTS

#### *Fort Union, Fort Clark*

The first of these to be erected was Fort Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone, near where Fort Buford now is, and Fort Clarke, some thirty-five miles below the present site of Fort Stevenson, on the right bank of the river. Around it lay the villages of the friendly Arickarees, Gros Ventres and Mandan Indians. In 1845 the Gros Ventres and Mandans moved up the river and built their villages on a promontory where it long stood.

#### *Fort Berthold*

In the same year the American Fur company began the building of a stockade on the extreme point of the bluffs over-looking the river. This was named Fort Berthold, in honor of a Mr. Berthold of St. Louis. In 1859 an opposition trading company erected another stockade about two hundred yards south of the former building which they named Fort Atkinson. It being found inadvisable to maintain trading posts so near together as Forts Clarke and Berthold, the former was broken up in the spring of 1860. In the winter of 1860-61, the Arickarees dwelt in a timbered point, about eight miles above the site of Fort Stevenson. In the winter of 1861-62 they had temporary quarters above Fort Berthold, and in March, 1862 they commenced the erection of a permanent village, whose ruins may still be seen on the prairie nearly opposite Fort Berthold. There on the 3rd of August, 1862 before their first crop of corn had ripened, they had a severe battle with the Sioux, and on the next day they abandoned their village and moved across the river.

They then built their lodges around Fort Berthold and joined once with the Gros Ventres and Mandans. In the fall of 1862, the two trading companies having been consolidated under the name of the Northwest Fur company, the old fort erected in 1845 was abandoned, and the stores and employes of the American Fur company, were moved into Fort Atkinson to which the name of Fort Berthold was transferred. This fortification still retains the name of Berthold. On Christmas eve of 1862, while most of the friendly Indians were absent at their winter quarters, the post was attacked by a large party of Sioux, who reduced the old fort, and the greater part of the village to ashes, and nearly succeeded in capturing the

inhabited stockade. But the citizen garrison defended itself bravely, and aided by the timely arrival of some Indians from the winter quarters succeeded in driving off the Sioux with great loss to the latter.

In the spring of 1863, the Isantee Sioux, who had been driven out of Minnesota after the massacre of the previous year, came to Berthold to form an alliance with the Berthold Indians against the whites. The two parties met in a ravine about three miles from the post, when, instead of advancing to shake hands, an Arickaree brave suddenly fired upon the Sioux, and a battle ensued, in which two Gros Ventres and nine Isantees were killed. Other difficulties with the enemy quickly followed and the condition of the post became dangerous, application for military assistance was made. General Alfred Sully, on the return march of his second northwestern Indian expedition, arrived at Berthold on the 29th of August, 1864, and detached from his expedition, one company, as garrison for the post.

On September 3rd the company moved into the stockade, but owing to a disagreement with the agent of the fur company, log buildings were erected outside the fort, and the troops moved into them in April, 1865. This was a season of plenty, the buffalo being abundant around the fort, and the troops feasted sumptuously.

General Sully's third northwestern Indian expedition arrived on its return march, at Berthold, August 8, 1865, and here General Sully issued an order directing the evacuation of Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone. The evacuation was completed on August 31st and from that time until the establishment of Fort Buford in 1868, Berthold was the extreme northern garrison in the valley of the upper Missouri.

On June 14, 1867 the troops moved from Fort Berthold to a point seventeen miles further east, where a post at that time called New Fort Berthold was about to be established. Fort Berthold was never armed by the government, nor was any rent charged for it. The use of it being given by the agent of the Northwest Fur company, in consideration of the protection afforded the trading post by the presence of the troops. At this time, however, it was found necessary to establish a permanent military post in the vicinity, not only to afford military protection to the friendly Indians and whites at Fort Berthold, but to serve as a base of supplies to the post, when about to be built at Devils Lake (Fort Totten). It was also necessary to have an intermediate post on the river, between the distant forts of Rice and Buford, and further, as a link in the chain of



posts along the proposed "northern emigrant route" from Minnesota to the gold mines—in Montana.

It was also necessary to remove the garrison from Fort Berthold, as no suitable military reservation of land could be made, which would not include the cornfields or gardens of the friendly Indians. As a base of supplies to Fort Totten (the goods to be brought up the river by steamboat from St. Louis, Mo., and sent across the country to Devils Lake, 130 miles east by wagon train under military escort) it was deemed advisable to build the fort, at the point where the Missouri quits its easterly course and bends to the south, but as there was not sufficient timber at that place, or a good steamboat landing, it was built seven miles west of there and named Fort Stevenson.

### *Fort Stevenson*

During the summer of 1867, while the fort was being built, the Sioux made three raids on the camp in force, and one attack by a small party.

The troops were compelled to labor very hard to build the fort, and being lodged in tents with poor food, they suffered greatly in health and many died. The fort was completed January 3, 1868.

### *Fort Buford*

Fort Buford was 250 miles by water above Fort Stevenson and 150 miles by land. It was established as a one company post in 1866, and increased to five companies in 1867. It was built near the site of old Fort Union, on the north side of the Missouri river, at the mouth of the Yellowstone. The territory on the north side of the Missouri was claimed by the Assinaboine Indians, from White Earth river, 65 miles east of the post, to Milk river, 150 miles to the west.

The Assiniboines were originally a part of the Yankton tribe of the great Sioux nation, and according to tradition, split off from that tribe and became a separate people, because of some trouble about a woman.

They called themselves "Hokes" and claimed to be Dacotas. The name Assiniboines means "stone boilers," and was given them by their neighbors on the north, the "Crees" because of their method of cooking meat, by dropping red hot stones into the water. Assiniboines were always friendly and rendered valuable services to the troops at Buford by keeping them constantly apprised of the move-

ments of the hostile Sioux. They were constantly at war with the Crows on the west, the Crees and British half breeds on the north, and the Yanktonais, Gros Ventres, Arickarees, Mandans and Teton Sioux on the south. On the south side of the Missouri were the Teton Sioux, who were hostile, and with a band of the Onkpapas, made frequent raids on the post killing at various times eleven men—five soldiers and six citizens.

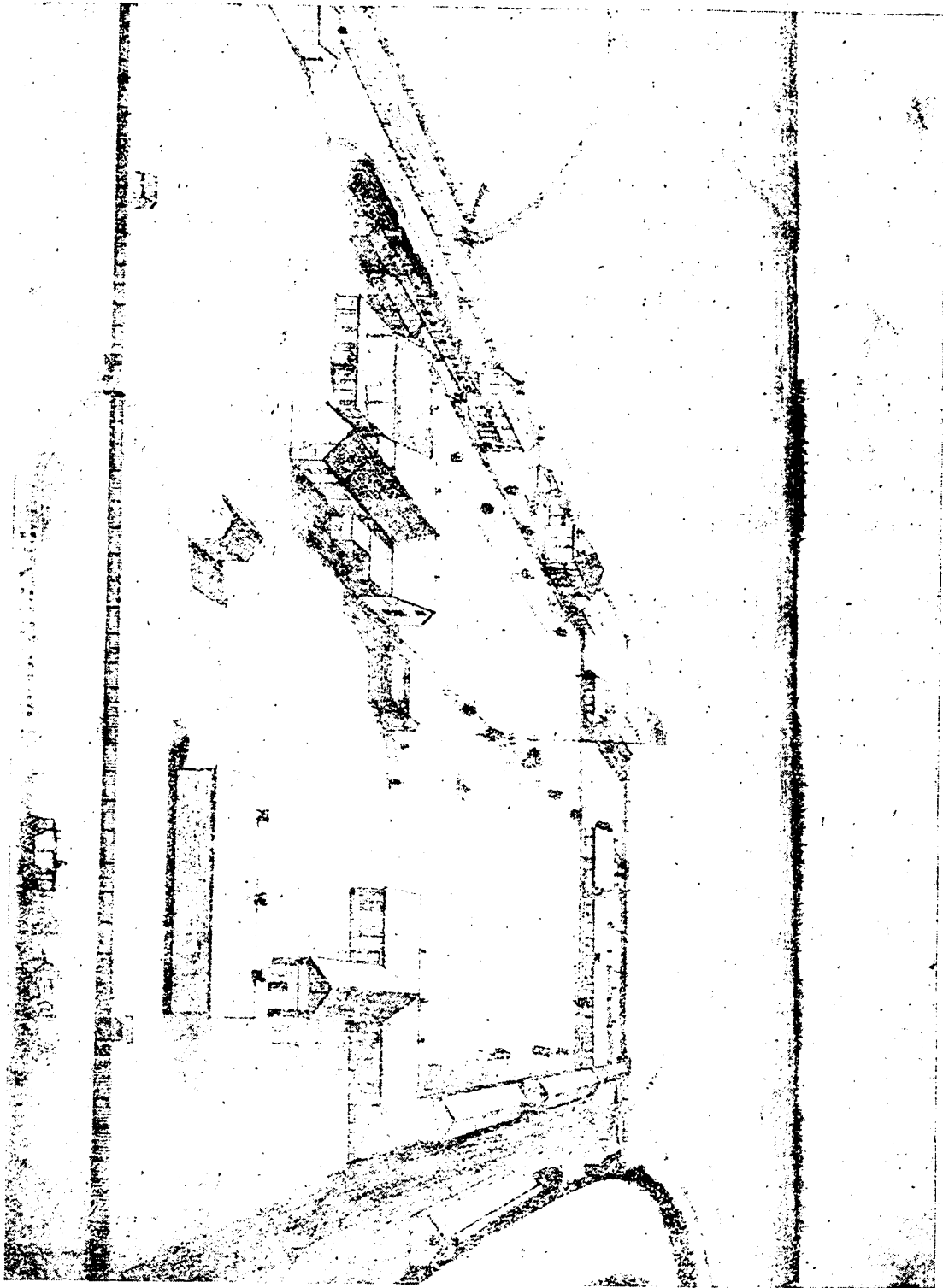
On August 28, 1868, they made an attack in force on the forts, killing three men and wounding three, and capturing 200 of the government herd of beef cattle. In addition to this constant war on the forts the Sioux constantly harrassed the Assiniboines, because of their friendship for the whites. Fort Buford is miles south of the Canadian line. There were early mail routes from Buford to the states. The first was via Forts Stevenson, Totten and Abercrombie to St. Paul, Minn. It took from three to six weeks for a letter to go to department headquarters at St. Paul. The Indians were very troublesome between Forts Stevenson and Totten, and in 1868 at different times killed five mail carriers on that route, three of whom were soldiers and two citizens. The second route was via Forts Rice and Sully to Sioux City, Iowa. Mail by this route was slower than the Totten route, and on both it was so subject to interruption that the fort was frequently without a mail for three months at a time.

Up to the early seventies the medical, hospital and commissary supplies for the Missouri river forts, were brought from St. Louis by a line of steamers, run by the firm of Durfee & Peck, but after that date the base of supplies was transferred to Sioux City, Iowa, the nearest railroad point on the south. The nearest fort, on the Missouri river, to Sioux City, was Fort Randall, on the right bank of the river, 100 miles above Yankton, which was established by General Harney in 1856. The next above was Fort Sully, situated on the east bank of the Missouri, twenty miles by river above Fort Randall. It was about the same distance to Fort Rice above. This post was half way between the head of navigation—Fort Benton—and the mouth of the Missouri, and 1,480 miles above St. Louis.

#### *Fort Sully*

The original Fort Sully, was established by General Alfred Sully, and was built on the same side of the river thirty miles below. It was abandoned because of the unhealthy character of the site, removed to the present location in August, 1866. During the winter succeeding the arrival of the troops on the new site they suffered in-

tensely from cold, their only quarters being such as could be constructed of slabs and shelter tents. The barracks for the men were not completed until late in 1867 and the officers quarters in 1868. Mail wagons were run weekly from Fort Sully to Sioux City during the entire year, although during the winter they were liable to frequent interruption from snow. There were no stopping places be-



FORT ABERCROMBIA

tween the Fort and Yankton and no inhabitants in the vicinity except the roving Indians, but few of whom were friendly.

### *Fort Abercrombie*

As the new city on the Missouri was stirring into life, the Red river settlements on the eastern boundary of the territory were gaining added strength.

Fort Abercrombie, which at this early period was a post of great importance, as being the terminus of the military mail routes—from Fort Stevenson, via. Fort Totton and Fort Wadsworth, via. Fort Ransom, and the point from whence mail from these posts was forwarded to department headquarters at St. Paul, was situated on the west bank of the Red River of the North, twelve miles north of the confluence of its two branches—the Bois de Sioux and the Otter Tail. Latitude 46m 2 7s north, longitude 96m. 28w. west. This post was established by act of congress, approved March 3, 1857, the general orders issued in June, directing that it be named Fort Abercrombie, and that it be established on the most eligible site near the head of navigation of the Red River of the North, in the vicinity of a place known as Graham's Point, Minn. In obedience to orders Lieut. Col. J. J. Abercrombie arrived with troops and encamped in a protected bend of the river on August 28, 1858. The heat was intense and the mosquitoes and buffalo flies intolerable, but the troops worked vigorously to build the log quarters in which they spent the winter. In July, 1859, the post was abandoned, but was again occupied in July, 1860.

In 1862, the post was besieged by some 300 Indians of the Sisseton and Yankton bands of Sioux. They drove away the cattle and horses belonging to the post, and those of the citizens near by. The Indians made two assaults on the fort, one on September 3rd, and the other on September 6th, 1862, but were repulsed. The fort, having no stockade was in imminent danger, but fortunately many of the citizens were able and willing to assist in its defense and a train laden with goods for the Red Lake Indians, having just arrived, having among other supplies, sixty double barreled shotguns, the teamsters and citizens were armed with them, and formed a militia company, which rendered effective service. In February, 1863, a stockade and block house were erected, and the fort made defensible against any number of Indians.

The valley of the Red River of the North at old Fort Abercrombie is about 1,700 feet above the level of the sea, and forms a perfectly flat prairie, broken only by the streams that drain it. It commences about fifty miles south of the old post, at the divide which

separates the waters of Lake Traverse, one source of the Red River from the waters of Big Stone Lake, the source of the Minnesota or St. Peter's rivers, and extends eastward into Minnesota, to a high range of hills sixty miles distant, called Leaf Mountains, westward in North Dakota to the Coteau des Prairies fifty miles distant, and Northward to the debouche of the river in Lake Winnipeg, only contracted at its western side by Pembina mountain, which is probably the northern abutment of the Coteau des Prairies, once the western shore of the great water that filled the broad Red River valley. As the Red river flows northward and into a colder climate, the snow and ice, which form in the water, melt on its sources before its outlet is free from ice, and this cause overflows of its bank which often occur. The tortuous course of the river, also causes in the spring, when the ice breaks up, frequent gorges of ice, and then the country behind the gorge becomes flooded. From this cause and also from floods in the Wild Rice and Cheyenne rivers, the mail and supply trains for the distant posts of Fort Stevenson and Buford were frequently delayed, and the stage of water in the Red River of North and its branches become the gorge by which the dwellers in those lonely stations on the Missouri river could judge of the probable regularity of their mail service.

Officers who were stationed at Fort Abercrombie during the late '60s state that the country then was infested with locusts, that came in countless swarms and destroyed every green thing, and that sixty miles west of them their ravages caused destitution and famine. They also stated that the climate was very cold during four or five months of the year, frequently being 40 degrees below zero, and in summer rising often to 100 degrees in the shade. Between these two extremes the mean annual temperature was 39 degrees. From Fort Abercrombie the mail was sent weekly by quartermaster team to St. Cloud, Minn., and from thence was forwarded to St. Paul.

#### *Fort Ransom*

Fort Ransom was one of the forts established in the department of Dakota for the protection of the settlers, who still held in vivid remembrance the bloody Sioux uprising in Minnesota in 1862.

On June 17, 1867, a battalion of the Tenth United States Infantry arrived at Bear's Den Hillock, from Fort Wadsworth and encamped there. The quarters were finished in August.

Fort Ransom is situated on the Sheyenne river, about seventy miles from its junction with the Red River of the North, and at the point where the Sheyenne bends suddenly from the north to the east. The locality had been a favorite camping ground for the Indians,

and numerous mounds that appeared to be of ancient and artificial origin, were found there.

Being thus protected by the proximity of United States troops, the settlements in that part of the territory rapidly increased and culminated, at the period of which I write, in the thriving town of Fargo, the first station on the Dakota division of the Northern Pacific railroad. Following the railroad westward came the settlers.

### *Fort Seward*

At the crossing of the James river, the "Riviere au Jabues" of the first explorers, the little post of Fort Seward was established coincident with the establishment of Camp Hancock, for the protection of railroad engineers and graders on the line between the Red and James rivers. There sprang up the promising settlement that became the Jamestown of today, and thereafter the mails and supply trains for the Missouri river forts were carried overland along the surveyed line of the railroad and the settlements on the Red river and the settlements on the Missouri were connected by a direct line of communication. The overland mail route from Fort Stevenson, via Fort Totten, to Fort Abercrombie, was abandoned. The Ree scout line from Fort Rice to Grand River fell into disuse. Mail and officers on leave went east from Camp Hancock; supply teams for all the Missouri forts now crossing the territory, coming to Edwinton, direct from the Minnesota line. What a saving of time and distance, and how near we seemed to be living to the states. We laughingly said we had no need to return to civilization; we had only to stay here and civilization would come to us.

Fifteen years before the establishment of Fort Berthold, in 1830, the American Fur Company of St. Louis, built their first stockade at the mouth of the Marias river, and after various changes, established permanent headquarters at Fort Benton, the head of the navigation on the Missouri river, in 1846, in what became in 1864 the Territory of Montana, but which was then included in the limits of Dakota Territory, which as originally organized included Montana, Idaho and Nebraska, thus embracing about half a million of square miles.

### *Fort Benton*

The first steamboat from St. Louis reached Fort Benton on June 22, 1860, and that event was the beginning of an important traffic on the upper Missouri river, and marked an important epoch in the history of the Northwest. The Indian trading post at Fort Benton was sold by the American Fur Company to the Northwest Fur Com-

pany in 1864. It was occupied by United States troops in October, 1869, to receive and forward freight for Forts Shaw and Ellis and Camp Baker, the last named post having been established in 1869 to protect Diamond City and other mining camps in the vicinity from Indian depredations. It was located on Smith's River or Deep Creek, a branch of the Missouri. It was seventy miles southeast of Fort Shaw, and 120 miles north of Fort Ellis.

Fort Benton is located on the Missouri, at the head of navigation, and is about 5,000 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, in Latitude 48 degrees, north, 110 degrees, 40 minutes, west, altitude about 6,500 feet above sea level.



FORT BENTON

*Fort Ellis*

Fort Ellis was located August 26, 1867, on the south bank of the Galliton river near Bozeman, Montana, and was distant some 245 miles, by circuitous route, south of Fort Benton.

*Fort Shaw*

Fort Shaw was located on Sun river, some twenty miles above its

mouth, June 30, 1867. Its original name was Camp Reynolds. The object of a military post on Sun river was to protect and keep open the route from Helena to Fort Benton, and to prevent, as far as possible, the incursion of Indians into the settlements to the south. It was garrisoned by four companies of the 13th Infantry, under Major Clinton, who had moved up the Missouri during the summer of 1866. The first battalion of the 13th built Camp Cooke—afterward abandoned—the same fall. Fort Shaw was named in remembrance of the services of Col. Robert G. Shaw, who lost his life in the assault on Fort Wayne in July, 1863, and was the only military post in the United States named after a colored man. Fort Shaw was sixty-four miles west by water from Fort Benton.

### *Supplies*

The supplies for these important posts, and for the military then operating in that country were brought up the Missouri, from St. Louis to Fort Benton, from where they were distributed by wagon train. The steamboats which brought up these supplies returned heavily laden with buffalo robes and valuable furs of the otter, mink and beaver, for the St. Louis market, and carried down "Pemmican" (dried buffalo meat) for the Indian agencies in Dakota Territory.

The steamboats of the line controlled by the firms of Durfee and Peck of St. Louis, were the pioneers who opened the gates of commerce in the far Northwest, and gave to all the vast regions thereabouts including the northwest territory of Canada, a market and an outlet for their surplus furs and ore, through the medium of this great waterway of the west.

Later came the steamboat line owned by Commodore Kountz of Pittsburgh, Penn., and at the period of which I write, as many as fifty cargoes per season were discharged at Fort Benton, while a fleet of some thirty boats were kept busy transporting troops and carrying supplies to the various military posts and Indian agencies on the Missouri.

With the beginning of the steamboat traffic, a new class of men appeared in the country. Steamers could not be run without wood, and although the cutting of wood for sale was a misdemeanor, made punishable by act of Congress, both by fine and imprisonment by the government, recognizing the importance and necessity of these great commercial enterprises chose to ignore all trespasses of that nature. By tacit consent, woodchoppers were imported into the country, and woodyards were established at points convenient for the landing of the boats, and usually near enough for protection to the military posts and agencies.





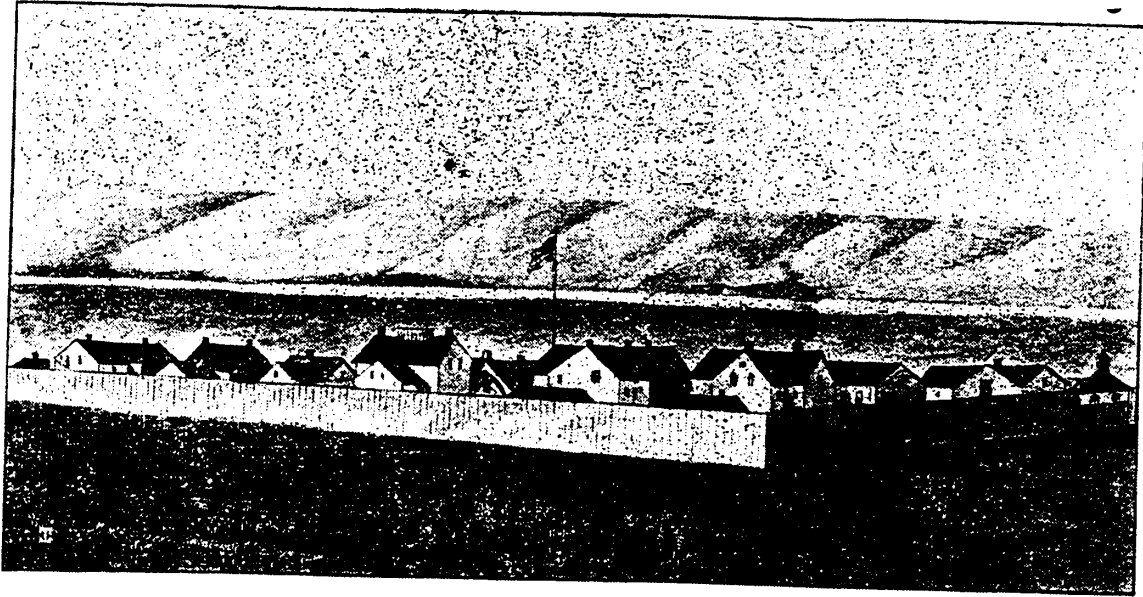
ON THE PLAINS OF DAKOTA IN 1868



GAME IN NORTH DAKOTA

## CHAPTER VI

### FORT RICE



SKETCH OF FORT RICE MADE IN 1871 BY LINDA SLAUGHTER

Fort Rice was the intermediate post between Forts Sully and Stevenson. It was located in latitude 46° 41' north. Longitude from Greenwich 100° 30' west on the right bank of the Missouri river. Owing to the inconsistency of the channel and other cause, the distances between different places on its banks are variously estimated hence the position of Fort Rice as regards the other points on the river has not been well ascertained, and has been stated differently by different authorities. To Sioux City, then the nearest railway terminus, it was about 836 miles—to the mouth of the Cannon Ball, the nearest stream of size below, it was held to be ten miles, and to the mouth of the Hart river—the next good-sized stream above, it was thought to be fifty miles.

Fort Sully was held to be 275 miles below by river, and Fort Stevenson, about, by river, 150 miles. Both of those forts were on the opposite side of the river. The ruins of old Fort Clarke and of the village formerly occupied by the Gros Ventres and Mandans were 120 miles above on the same side of the river. The Rice military reservation was taken from the lands of the Onkpapas, one of the hostile tribes of the Sioux nation. The fort was situated about

300 yards from the margin of the river, and at an elevation of thirty-five feet above low water mark.

Fort Rice was established in 1864. The first buildings were of cottonwood logs with roofs of earth. They were constructed by the 30th Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry. This regiment had been captured during the war of the rebellion, and released on their parole of honor, not to fight against the southern confederacy. "Galvanized Yankees," they were called, and with part of the 6th Iowa Cavalry, and 50th Wisconsin Infantry were sent to the northwest after the Minnesota massacre to fight Indians, and garrison the Missouri river forts. While building Fort Rice, the troops were constantly besieged by the Indians, and numbers were killed daily in the camp, until the walls of the fort were constructed, and afterward, not a day passed while they were cutting timber on the river banks to get ready the logs for the quarters, that some of the men engaged in chopping trees, or some of the men who were on guard, were not killed by the Indians who were massed among the hills on the west. The post cemetery, which was located on a neighboring knoll, was quickly populated, and it often chanced that funeral parties who were carrying the slain to their resting places, were attacked by mounted warriors. Several are said to have been captured and put to death by slow torture in plainview of their comrades in the fort, apparently with the design of provoking them to come to the rescue, but the troops were so greatly outnumbered by the Indians that they were compelled to remain on the defensive, and to go out to give battle to the hordes of demoniac savages, would have led to the extermination of the entire command.

The places where these savage executions took place, were marked by monuments of stone, with the names of the unfortunates lettered thereon, and were terrible reminders to the later inmates of the fort, as to what fate awaited them should they be taken prisoners. To add to the horrors of the situation of those the unhappy volunteers, their term of service expired, but they were not permitted to go home. Indeed, they could not have done so, as the country between Rice and Sully was overrun by the Sioux and to attempt the journey meant certain death. A number are said to have committed suicide, and others are said to have become insane from nostalgia. The 1st United States Infantry and 1st, 4th, 13th, and 31st Regiments Volunteer Infantry were also on duty there. Also the 3rd and 8th Minnesota Infantry and one regiment of Minnesota's Cavalry. In 1868 the fort was rebuilt, and old log quarters were demolished and new buildings, were erected on the old site. It was then garrisoned

by the 31st and 22nd W. S. Infantry, afterward relieved by the 17th U. S. Infantry.

*Cheif "Bear Bite"*

In 1871, I counted three hundred graves of murdered men, in the post cemetery, all of them neatly marked with wooden headboards, bearing the name and number of the regiment, with date of death, and the legend, "Killed by Indians." There were also numerous graves of wives and children of officers and enlisted men, and of civilians and scouts, the former having been employes at the fort, or on the steamboats that brought up the supplies for the forts in summer. In the center of the grounds was a platform of boards,



INDIAN BURIALS

raised on four poles, upon which wrapped in blankets, lay the remains of "Bear Bite," an Onkpapa chief who in his old age became a friend of the white man. He died in his teepee near the fort in

1868. On his deathbed he prophesied that droves of the palefaces would overrun the country and drive the Indians still further westward. Sending for the great chiefs of his nation, he counselled them to cultivate friendship with the whites, as the only way to preserve their tribes from extermination. He then sent for the commander of the post and asked that his body might be placed in the white man's graveyard, in order that his spirit might watch over and protect the inmates of the fort. This request was complied with, and thus it came that the body of Bear Bite, the great war chieftain lay in state in the center of the cemetery, surrounded by the graves of murdered soldiers, whom his own people laid low.

In one corner of the cemetery, were the bodies of two papooses, resting also on a raised platform, as is the Indian custom, to prevent the wolves from digging them up and devouring them, and under which, at frequent intervals, several Arrickaree squaws would sit for days at a time, wrapped up, in blankets and uttering discordant cries of sorrow.

### *Description of the Fort*

The new fort was built in the form of a quadrangle, 544x866 feet, enclosed by a stockade, ten feet high, of two-inch oak planks, secured to a strong frame. There were two sally ports and two projecting bastions two stories high on the roofs of the guard houses, built of squared and dove-tailed logs. The upper story was placed in such a manner on the lower that the corners of the former corresponded to and projected over the sides of the latter. On the top was a high platform and an octagonal sentry box, reached by winding stairways from story to story. Each story of the bastions was twenty-one feet square and seven feet high. Within the stockade were six store houses, six company quarters and mess rooms, ten double sets of officers quarters, hospital, guard house, bakery, headquarters and adjutants officers, laundress' quarters, company schools, library and reading rooms for the enlisted men, containing 200 volumes, headquarters of regimental band and the powder magazine and ordnance storeroom. The magazine was a substantial stone building, stood in one corner of the stockade. The men's barracks stood at one side of the grounds, with the officers quarters in a row facing to the east, opposite to them. The other buildings in parallel rows, were ranged on the other two sides. The grounds in the center of the square thus formed, was neatly kept and policed and laid out with gravel walks. The flag staff and band stand in the

center of the gravelled driveway, ran between the rear of the building and the stockade, around the four sides of the fort. The gate in the wall was kept open all day. It was guarded by cannon, and here the guard was stationed, while a sentry paced constantly back and forth inside the gate. Two more kept a watch of the surrounding country and of the interior of the fort from their sentry boxes on the dizzy heights of the bastions, which occupied the northeast and two southwest corners of the fort on the constant outlook for those two dreaded foes—fire and Indians. The officers houses were built of cottonwood boards, finished inside with lath and plaster, and having floors of matched pine flooring. Between the studing of the outer wall, the space was filled in with adobe.

The chimneys were made of brick, made at the post, and all had substantial stone foundations.

Outside the stockade were the corral, horse stables and ice houses, the interpreters house, and the storeroom and the other buildings of the post trader, including billiard rooms for both officers and men. On the north were a cluster of log buildings and teepees in which lives the Arickarees scouts and mail carriers and their squaws, papooses and dogs. Their herd of ponies were kept hobbled on the prairie near by. The post garden was in the first ravine to the south, where a steam saw mill was also at work. The herd of cattle from which the supply of beef was obtained were pastured on the prairie near the same place.

The supply of water for all purposes, came from the Missouri river, and was filtered for drinking purposes. The provisions were brought by river from Sioux City, Iowa, by steamer and a year's supply was always kept on hand. The river was open usually from April to November when supplies were cut off for the winter. From the windows of the upper story of the officers quarters there was a grand view of the surrounding country on both sides of the river which was stretched away to the eastward in a wide sweep of plain and meadow and plateau, and was framed on the far horizon with a rim of low, rolling hills. To the northwest were similar, but loftier, hills sloping to the west and bounding a long stretch of grassy plain. On the southwest they broke into irregular and fantastic shapes. In the foreground by the river the white walls of the fort shone brilliantly in the sunshine. Alone in that desolate country it stood, a sheltering home to the whites.

Its bugle calls rang clearly forth in the misty gray of morning, and its sunset gun at evening boomed across the darkening river, a

solemn greeting to the nightfall, a knell for the day departed. At all hours of the day and night faithful sentinels from the higher towers kept watch of the surrounding country to guard against surprises from the savage foe which the inmates of the fort had learned from sad experience was never far away. War parties lurked behind the neighboring hills, and the venturesome herder or soldier who ventured alone out of rifle shot of the fort seldom came back. The smoke of their signals was visible by day, and their watch fires gleamed on distant hills by night. The strong fort itself with its vigilant sentries and rifled cannon offered little temptation to the dusky warriors to essay its capture, but they lay in wait constantly to surprise and slay the Arickaree scouts, the faithful couriers and mail carriers, who by long laborious trips on horseback, brought up from Fort Sully, the semi-monthly mails, and who showed by their fidelity, their worthiness to wear the blue, Indians though they were.

The tribes of the Dakota or Sioux nation that then inhabited this country, were the Yanktonnanna Sioux, who lived east of the river on the "Plateau Du Coteau Du Missouri," and were more powerful than the other tribes. In the vicinity of the fort were the Onkpapa and Sihasapo Sioux, while further south on the same side of the river were the Itazipcho Sioux. These Indians were constantly at war with the Mandans, Arrickarees, Gros Ventres and Assinaboines on the north, the Crows on the west, the Ponca tribes on the south, and the Crees and Chippeways in the Devils Lake region.

The Sioux were exceedingly fierce and vindictive, cherishing the most malignant feelings of hate toward the white men who had built forts in their land and sent steamboats up the river to frighten away the buffalo, upon which their tribes for generations before had subsisted. Aside from the flesh, which they ate fresh in summer, and dried in the form of "Pemmican" for winter's use, they made clothing of its skins, and exchanged the robes made from its furs at the traders stations for many articles of use and comfort. Now the buffalo had vanished, only the whitening bones of those slain by their forefathers were left. The Indians had their wrongs but they were wrongs inflicted through the government, by the entire people. Yet so mercilessly did they revenge those wrongs upon the innocent and helpless captives who fell into their hands, that they extinguished in all feeling hearts, the pity and sympathy which otherwise would have been theirs.

## CHAPTER VII

### FROM THE SOUTH TO THE WEST

At the close of the reconstruction period in the south my husband, who had served through the war of the rebellion, as surgeon of the 55th Kentucky Mounted Infantry, with rank of major of staff, was serving as post surgeon, U. S. A., at Swayne barracks, Tennessee.

The military posts in the department of the south were then consolidated and he was ordered to army headquarters at Washington, D. C., and thence to the headquarters of the department of Dakota at St. Paul, for service in the west.

On reporting there, he received orders for Fort Benton, Montana, but we stopped some days at the Merchant's hotel and formed a pleasant acquaintance with the officers at headquarters. Before we left the city, Surgeon J. F. Head, medical director of the department, changed my husband's orders from Fort Benton to Fort Rice, Dakota Territory, which he said was a much pleasanter post.

We made the journey via the steamer "Minnesota," on the Mississippi river from St. Paul to Dubuque, thence by rail to Sioux City, Iowa, and up the Missouri river, by the steamer "Katie P. Kountz," of the Commodore Kountz line of steamboats to Fort Rice. Mr. Wm. Braithwaite, now a prominent merchant of Bismarck, was clerk of the steamer. At Yankton, a town of about 1,000 people, we took our last lingering look at civilization. At a little town called St. Helena the people were in a state of excitement. A man named——— had been hung the night before by a mob, and a man came on board with part of the rope with which he had been hung, which he wished to cut in small pieces and sell to the passengers. He offered the first choice of his rueful wares to several army officers who were on board, and their indignation was so great that the captain of the boat ordered the man ashore, but there was one superstitious man on board, and the cook's assistant followed him, and bought several inches of the gruesome rope, which he believed would be a talisman to bring him good luck.

#### *A River Trip*

Two weeks were consumed in the journey up the river, and it is impossible to describe the dreadful sinking of the heart, the loneliness, the dread feeling of solitude and impending danger, that deep-



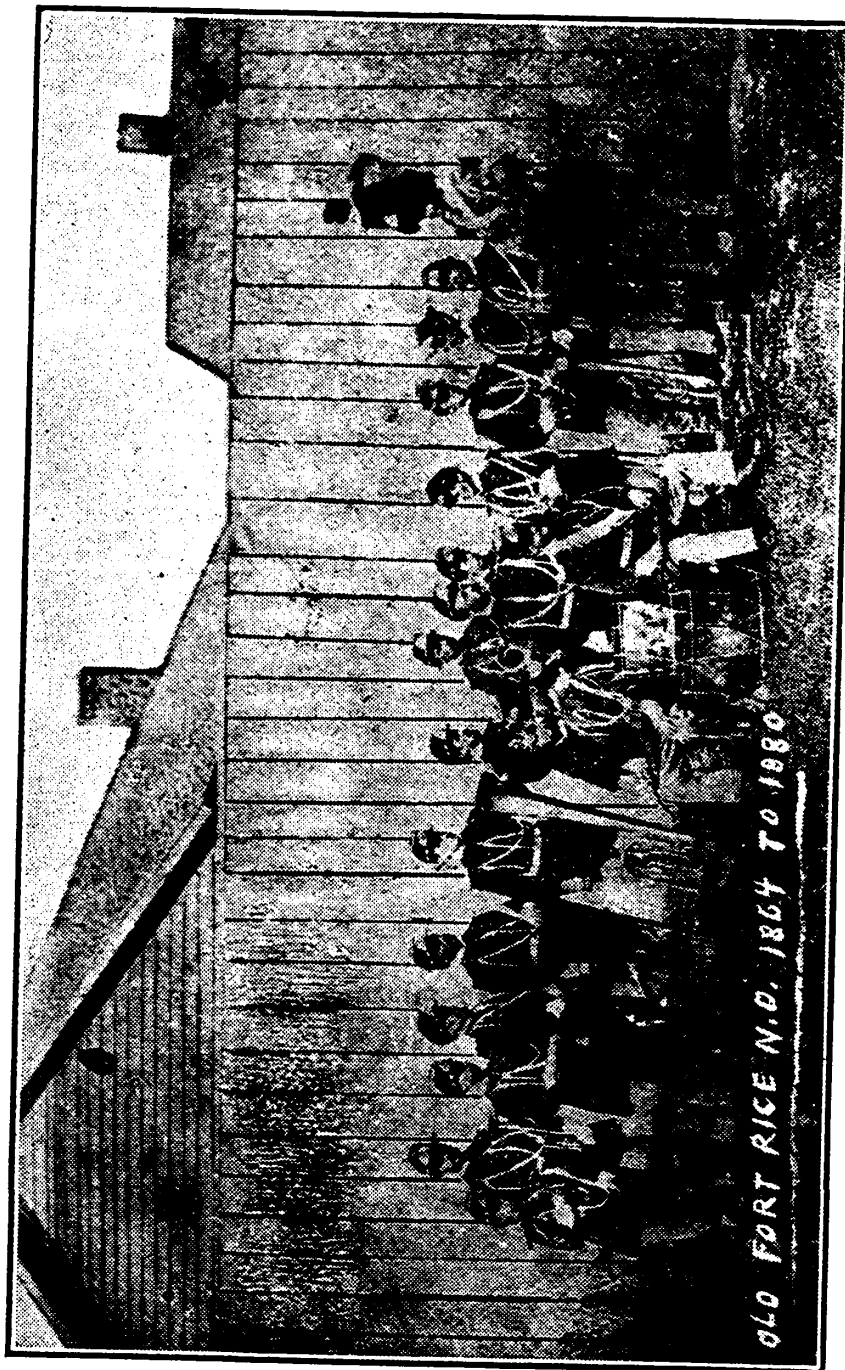
ened as we steamed further and further up the river, passing the Indian agencies of the friendly Brules, Toncas, Cheyennes and Yanctonais. At Fort Sully, a number of officers from the fort came on board, among them, Captain Dickey of the 22nd, a brother of Major S. S. Dickey, now of Bismarck, and we were taken up to the fort. From Sully to the mouth of the Big Cheyenne river, it is seven miles by land and fifteen by water. We were driven across the country in an ambulance, and ferried across the Missouri in the Government batteau, arriving at the Big Cheyenne one hour before the steamboat. Above Sully, as we proceeded, the solitude deepened, and at length we reached a land where it seemed no human foot had ever trod, and realm of the hostile Sioux. Save the scant growth of timber that flanked the willow fringed bank of the river, not a tree nor shrub disturbed the monotony of the scene. No sound broke the stillness, save the panting of the steamboat's engine, and the rushing of the waves about her prow. Afar in the distance, crowning some lonely height or abrupt hill, at intervals was seen the only evidence that the land had ever been traversed by human steps. These were the rude platforms formed of cottonwood boughs and willow withes, upon which reposed in death, the last poor remnants of some perished chieftain. The Indian graves burdened with the decaying forms of those who western people aptly style "the good Indians."

We reached Fort Rice, strangers in a strange land. The first officer to greet us, was Lieut. Josiah Chance of Ohio, who was officer of the day, and who kindly proffered us the use of his quarters until our goods could be unpacked and our own quarters made ready. There we were cordially greeted by the officers and ladies of the post and made to feel that we were among friends. In these remote army stations, where all are surrounded by the same danger and exposed to the same hardships, there is engendered a kindliness of feeling and a friendly interest in each other, that is seldom found in civil life, and we were soon installed in comfortable quarters amid pleasant social surroundings. General Crittenden, Colonel of the regiment was then absent on leave, and Major Denis H. Sanger was post commandant.

### *Life at Fort Rice*

A pleasant feature of the social life at the fort was the playing of the regimental band in the center of the parade ground each summer evening at retreat and at the weekly hops in the large library room, when its presence insured us always the latest music and the newest dances. The same etiquette prevailed on these occasions as

in the most exclusive circles of New York and Washington. As some of the officers were always absent, on escort duty, to the other forts, or on expeditions of some kind, those remaining were punctilious in seeing that their wives were provided with escorts and partners. These ladies in the parlance of West Point, were called "widows," but I had not then heard the expression, and when a gay young officer one evening came into a friend's house where I was



FORT RICE MILITARY BAND

dining, when my husband was away, and announced that he had been sent to escort the doctor's "widow" to the hops. I was greatly disconcerted, and rising with all the dignity I could muster, I in-